

# **REMARKS AT THE NAVAL ACADEMY**

**Ambassador Lee Feinstein**

**24 February 2010**

**Naval Academy, Gdynia**

Thank you, Captain Miesikowski, for your generous introduction. It is an honor for me to be here at the Polish Naval Academy to address Poland's future military and civilian leaders. I wanted to speak to you today because you will be the ones who shepherd and nurture our proud Alliance in the twenty-first century, as we work together to anticipate and respond to new threats to our collective security.

I came to Poland with a mandate from President Obama and Secretary Clinton to broaden and deepen America's strong and enduring relationship with Poland.

My goal is to work with Poles to build a relationship that reflects Poland's growing role in Europe and on the world stage. We already have a secure foundation on which to build, based on the historic ties that bind our two countries. Those are ties reinforced by our common struggles for freedom and by generations of strong family bonds.

Secretary Clinton has called Poland "one of our closest Allies." Today we are bound together more tightly than ever through our membership in NATO. Our soldiers stand shoulder to shoulder in dangerous places like Kosovo and Afghanistan.

We are also moving forward together within NATO to counter the growing threat from the proliferation of ballistic missiles. In addition to deepening our bilateral strategic relationship, our cooperation in this area will make a substantial

contribution to NATO's collective capacity to counter existing and future threats.

Earlier this month, the Sejm and the Senate voted by an overwhelming margin to approve a bilateral Supplemental Status of Forces Agreement. When ratified, the Status of Forces Agreement will elevate the strategic importance of our security partnership.

The United States is also committed to assisting Poland as it moves ahead with modernization plans for its armed forces. In addition to transferring two decommissioned U.S. Navy frigates and before that four Seasprite helicopters to the Polish Navy, our two navies have historically conducted a robust series of exchange programs and seminars. Staff talks between Polish Navy and U.S. Naval Command Europe were held in May 2009 for the first time since 2006.

After a break of over a decade, Poland last year nominated a candidate for the U.S. Naval Academy. The candidate, Midshipman Dagmara Broniatowska, was accepted with the class of 2013 and is doing well by all reports.

This year, we aim to conduct more seminars and expand exchange opportunities for Polish Midshipmen. We are also proud that the U.S. and Polish navies will again participate in BALTOPS in June 2010.

Like the United States, Poland understands that NATO is more than a defensive alliance. It is an alliance of values, one that continues to play an essential role in promoting freedom around the world.

Poland has not shirked its obligation to share the experience of its successful post-Communist transition with other countries,

supporting them as they chart their own paths to democracy and open markets.

Poland has sought to extend the Euro-Atlantic sphere of stability and prosperity to the countries of Eastern Europe. A co-founder of the Community of Democracies, Poland has been an outspoken champion of democracy and human rights around the world.

In the face of harsh realities, the Poles rallied themselves in a mass movement, and threw off communist rule, creating a chain reaction that led to the collapse of the communist system in Central and Eastern Europe.

The courage and moral force of this movement had ripple effects around the world. It is no exaggeration to say that Poland played a key role both in ending the Cold War and in creating the more democratic world in which we now live.

As Vice President Biden said during his visit to Warsaw, Poland is a “champion for its neighbors and a role model for the entire world.” Our two countries are natural partners when it comes to confronting the challenges and embracing the opportunities of the new century.

Just as Poland has become a leader within NATO, so it is becoming an increasingly influential and effective member of the European Union. We welcome this.

As members of the NATO Alliance, our two countries have worked for the last decade to build a strong and secure Europe and to defend and promote democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

Today, thanks to the partnership between our nations and others, Europe is stronger than ever. With the ratification of the

Treaty of Lisbon, the European Union is poised to become even more dynamic.

Again, we welcome this. A strong European Union is in America's interest because Europe is an essential partner in advancing security and prosperity. The challenges we face demand collective responses, and the European Union is an invaluable and increasingly effective force for global progress.

We do not see the EU as a competitor of NATO. As Secretary Clinton has said repeatedly – most recently two days ago – the United States and NATO must work together with the EU as it applies its Common Security and Defense Policy to determine how we can best support one another in addressing security challenges. Poland is a natural bridge between the U.S. and the EU and between the NATO and the EU in this endeavor.

We must act together to carry out the important work that remains unfinished: the transition to democracy is incomplete in parts of Europe and Eurasia; arms control regimes that once served us well are now fraying; and in too many places, economic opportunity is still too narrow and shallow.

Adding to these ongoing challenges, the institutions that guarded Europe's and North America's security during the 20<sup>th</sup> century were not designed with 21<sup>st</sup> century threats in mind. To meet the new threats we face, we must modernize and strengthen that partnership.

New thinking is underway on both sides of the Atlantic. NATO is revising its Strategic Concept to prepare for the Alliance's summit at the end of this year. It is no coincidence that two of the trans-Atlantic community's most respected foreign policy thinkers – former U.S. Secretary of State Albright and former Polish Foreign Minister Rotfeld – were asked to play a leading role in reviewing and updating the Strategic Concept.

As Secretary Clinton noted in remarks in Washington just two days ago, we face a new strategic landscape. “New technologies, new adversaries, and new ideologies threaten our security. And once again, there is little certainty about the future.”

To confront that uncertainty, we have to go back to basics. We must remember that the original tenets that defined the Alliance – defending our nations, strengthening transatlantic ties, and fostering European integration are still the basic goals that bind us together today.

However, amid that continuity of purpose the ways in which we pursue our goals must change. The new Strategic Concept must consolidate the gains we have made *and* reflect the new nature and origins of the threats we face today.

Energy security is a particularly pressing priority. Countries vulnerable to energy cut-offs face not only economic consequences but strategic risks as well. We welcome the recent establishment of the U.S.-EU Energy Council, and we are determined to support Europe in its efforts to diversify its energy supplies.

And there are other dangers, including cyber threats, nuclear terrorism, global criminal networks that traffic in weapons, drugs, and people; and climate change. We will not succeed unless we confront these challenges together.

Some would have us believe that Europe has moved down on the United States’ list of priorities. To the contrary, European security remains an anchor of U.S. foreign and security policy. A strong Europe is essential. Much of what we hope to accomplish globally depends on working together with Europe.

That list is long. We are working with European allies and partners to help bring stability to Afghanistan and to confront the dangers posed by Iran's nuclear ambitions.

We are working with Europe to help meet the challenge of energy and climate security and to revitalize the global economy.

We do all these things together not just because we share strategic interests. Our work is also an expression of shared values. We stand with Poland, united by an understanding of the importance of liberty and freedom. Poles, who long fought under the banner "*Za Wolnosc Wasza i Nasza*," understand these are essential values – values worth fighting for.

As we move forward with a new NATO Strategic Concept, a set of core principles will guide us in our approach and in our joint effort.

First and foremost, we will maintain an unwavering commitment to the pledge enshrined in Article 5 of the NATO treaty that an attack on one is an attack on all. When Poland and our other NATO allies invoked Article 5 in the aftermath of the attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, it was a proclamation to the world that our promise to each other was not rhetorical, but real. Our commitment to Europe's defense is equally strong.

Nor will we abandon the cornerstones of our collective security. We will not recognize spheres of influence, and we will rigorously uphold the principle that sovereign states have the right to make their own decisions and choose their own alliances.

Likewise, security in Europe must be indivisible; for too long, the public discourse around Europe's security has been fixed on geographical and political divides. The reality is that there are not many Europes; there is only one Europe; and it is a Europe that

includes the United States as its partner; and it is a Europe that includes Russia.

As Secretary Clinton has said, while Russia faces challenges to its security, NATO is not among them. We want a cooperative NATO-Russia relationship that produces concrete results and draws NATO and Russia closer together.

We must work constructively with Russia where we share areas of common interest and common concerns. We also must find ways to manage our differences with Russia where they persist and stand firm where our principles or vital interests are at stake. Again, that means no recognition for Abkhazia and South Ossetia, no recognition of spheres of influence, and commitment to the principle that sovereign states have the right to make their own decisions and choose their own alliances.

We intend to use the NATO-Russia Council as a forum for frank discussions about areas where we disagree. We will use it to press Russia to live up to its commitments on Georgia and to reiterate our commitment to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all states.

We will use it to challenge the assertion put forward in Russia's new military doctrine that NATO's enlargement and its global actions constitute a military danger to Russia.

We will also use the Council to advocate on behalf of human rights and individual liberty. As we look ahead, our challenge with Russia is to build a relationship where the principles that both sides have agreed to on paper are consistently respected in practice. In short, we will hold Russia to its commitments.

Both NATO and the EU are important mechanisms for promoting European integration. NATO's success in providing a security foundation for Europe's transformation is one of the great accomplishments not only of NATO but, as many of you also believe, of any political-military alliance in history.

And it must remain a defining feature. The NATO membership process, which requires applicants to make reforms across their political, economic, and defense sectors, has helped create the stable, democratic Europe we see today. And there can be no question that NATO will continue to keep its doors open to new members.

Working together, we have achieved a great deal. In the past 20 years, most of Europe has emerged from the shadow of totalitarian oppression to become a showcase for peace, opportunity and prosperity.

The condition of modern Europe, however, is not a miracle handed to the people of Europe. It is the result of years of careful, courageous work by leaders and citizens to create institutions and institute policies that brought together former adversaries and united them in common cause.

Now it is our turn. Now it is *your* turn. We all have a responsibility to continue that tradition of leadership and to renew trans-Atlantic institutions in the twenty-first century. Poland, a leader within NATO in every important sense, will play a key role in that undertaking.

If we are to succeed, NATO must remain the cornerstone of Euro-Atlantic security. Yet we cannot shut our eyes or shut our doors to those challenges that transcend geography and the traditional definitions of security problems. NATO must be part of us helping to find the solutions. And as we do so, this Alliance



will continue enhancing the peace and progress of an interconnected world.

NATO is about much more than strengthening our security; at its core, it is about defending and advancing our values in the world.

The Euro-Atlantic alliance is greater than the sum of its parts. While we may need to upgrade our tools, our vision and the values upon which it is based, have stood the test of time. The United States is honored to stand side by side with Poland as we work in concert to fulfill that vision.

Dziękuję bardzo.